



**Testimony in Support of S.B. 991, An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement for
Community Health Workers**

Human Services Committee

Doris A. Maldonado Mendez

February 21, 2023

Dear Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, and esteemed members of the Human Services Committee,

My name is Doris A. Maldonado Mendez. I stand in support of S.B. 991, An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Health Workers. I am the Chair of the CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, entirely funded by the federal Administration for Community Living to engage in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities that contribute to a comprehensive, coordinated, and self-determined system of individualized services and supports that is centered on and directed by individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. I am also the Statewide Bilingual Health Information Specialist & Certified Community Health Worker for PATH CT, CT's Family to Family Health Information Center. F2Fs are a federally funded program in all 50 U.S. states and territories providing crucial services to families, providers, communities, and states to better serve children with special health care needs.

Currently, Connecticut's Medicaid program does not reimburse Community Health Worker (CHW) services or incentivize health care providers to work with CHWs. Community Health Workers are an effective way to address inequities and promote health for individuals and communities particularly for low-income households served by Medicaid. Considering the state's workforce shortage, especially for our DD communities, this would be one opportunity to address the issue.

The Council supports all efforts that will increase access to alternative home and community-based services to meet the needs of people who prefer to receive care services and supports in their home or community, rather than in an institutional setting. In August 2022, the Council executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) through June 30, 2023 with Health Equity Solutions for the purpose of developing training for community health workers to better serve individuals with developmental disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities, Level 3 Autism, anxiety, behavior disorders, and other psychiatric conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 991, An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Health Workers. Please count the Council as resource in the legislation pertaining to developmental disabilities. This is one purpose of our federal funding from the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act.

“Nada Sobre Nosotros Sin Nosotros.”

Best regards/Estimadamente,

Doris A. Maldonado Mendez, M.Ed, GAL, HIS, CCHW, YMHFA

Chair, CT Council on Developmental Disabilities